BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

NATIVE LIVES, NATIVE STORIES

BOOKLIST FOR ADULTS, TEENS, & CHILDREN

2025

BPL.ORG

NATIVE LIVES, NATIVE STORIES

is a list of books published in the previous year about the experiences of Native and Indigenous communities throughout North America. This all-ages booklist has been an important part of the Boston Public Library's annual observance of Native American Heritage Month since 2021.

We would like to acknowledge the Massachusett Tribe, the indigenous peoples from whom the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has taken its name. We pay our respects to the ancestral bloodline of the Massachusett Tribe and its descendants, who still inhabit historical Massachusett Tribe territories to this day.

Compiled by Boston Public Library staff:

Jordan Draves (she/they)
Native Lives, Native Stories Chairperson, Reader Services Specialist, Central Library

Emily Atkins (she/her)
Branch Librarian, Roslindale Branch

Sujei Lugo
Children's Librarian, Connolly Branch

M. H.
Librarian, Branch Staff

Ethan Pike (he/him)
Children's Librarian, West End Branch

On the cover:

Jen Ferguson, Author of
A Constellation of Minor Bears

Photographed by Mel Shea

Earrings by Savage Rose Designs

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

Can You Hear the Plants Speak?

By Nicholas Hummingbird (Cahuilla and Apache) & Julia Wasson, Illustrated by Madelyn Goodnight (Chickasaw Nation)

A child spends summers with his great-grandparents learning about plants, animals, and their connection to the land. As he grows up and moves to the city, he continues the tradition of growing plants and crops that renew the land and self.

J PICTURE HUMMINGB N

Circle of Love

By Monique Gray Smith (Cree/Lakota), Illustrated by Nicole Neidhardt (Diné)

We join Molly at the Intertribal Community Center, where she introduces us to family and friends. They dance, sing, garden, learn, pray, and eat together. And tonight, they come together for a feast!

J PICTURE GRAYSMIT M

Dance Fast

By AR Cribbins (Pomo)

Bizzy can't wait to dance at the summer gathering and plans to make a perfect regalia to wear. She has high expectations and makes small mistakes, but dancing for her people makes everything better.

J PICTURE CRIBBINS A

A Family Tree

By Staci Lola Drouillard (Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe), Illustrated by Kate Gardiner (Chaubunagungamaug band of Nipmuck Indians)

When Francis's family decides to move from their home and their beloved tree along the Gigchigamiing river, Francis wishes to take the tree with them. A story about the interconnection of family and plant roots to our lands.

J PICTURE DROUILLA S

Grampy's Chair

By Rebecca Thomas (Mi'kmaq), Coco Apunnguaq Lynge (Kalaaleq Inuk)

The chair sits in Grampy's living room, making space for him and "my love," his granddaughter. Through the passage of time, the chair and the family experience physical and emotional life cycles.

J PICTURE THOMAS R

It's Powwow Time!

By Martha Troian (Lac Seul First Nation and Wabauskang First Nation), Hawlii Pichette (Mushkego Cree)

Bineshii wakes up to the smells and sounds coming from the kitchen, which can only mean it's powwow time. He hops in the car with his mother and attends his first powwow, where he experiences the joy, traditions, and culture of his community.

J PICTURE TROIAN M

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

My Little Ogichidaa: An Indigenous Lullaby

By Willie Poll (Métis), Hawlii Pichette (Mushkego Cree)

An Indigenous woman holds her belly and recites a lullaby filled with strength and solidarity for her future child. An ode to motherhood, Native resistances, and the ongoing battle of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit folks to exist and grow.

J PICTURE POLL W

Stitches of Tradition (Gashkigwaaso Tradition)

By Marcie Rendon (White Earth Nation), Illustrated by Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley (Wasauksing First Nation)

Tatiana's grandmother is always ready to sew and stitch ribbon skirts for her beloved granddaughter. For each ceremony or special event, the bonding between the two of them grasps the love, community, and empowerment between Native elders and youth.

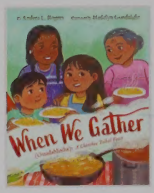
J PICTURE RENDON M

This Land

Ashley Fairbanks (Anishinaabe), Illustrated by Bridget George (Anishinaabe)

Your home, your schools, and your favorite places all sit on Indigenous lands. Fairbanks encourages readers to learn and respect the people who have lived here and continue to live and survive on this land despite displacement and colonization.

J PICTURE FAIRBANK A



When We Gather (Ostadahlisiha): A Cherokee Tribal Feast

By Andrea L. Rogers (Cherokee), Illustrated by Madelyn Goodnight (Chickasaw)

As Spring approaches, a Cherokee child goes with their family on a quest to find wild onions for their community feast. Food, respect, and sharing are what makes a community gathering feel like home.

J PICTURE ROGERS A

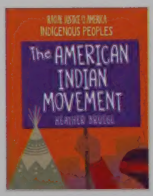
CHILDREN'S CHAPTER BOOKS

Sarah Ponakey, Storycatcher and Âhâsiw's Forest Powwow

By Sita MacMillan (Zagime Anishinabek), Illustrated by Azby Whitecalf (Plains Cree)

Sarah has trouble adjusting to life in the city but realizes she can connect with her Cree culture from anywhere after she's whisked to a magical forest powwow.

J EARLY CHAPTER MACMILLA S



The American Indian Movement

By Heather Bruegl (Oneida)

Learn about how Indigenous Americans in the mid-20th century drew attention to injustices past and present, fought for fair treatment, and inspired modern Native activists.

J E93 .B8864 2024

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

Buffalo Dreamer

By Violet Duncan (Plains Cree and Taino)

Summer visits her family on a Canadian reservation and starts dreaming about escaping a residential school like the one her grandpa attended. When she learns about unmarked children's graves, she seeks answers about her community's painful past.

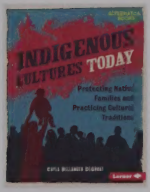
J FICTION DUNCAN V

Find Her

By Ginger Reno (Cherokee)

Twelve-year-old Wren fights to find her missing Cherokee mother while also navigating a chilling town mystery, a new friendship, and a family in need of healing.

J FICTION RENO G

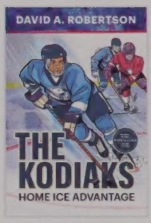


Indigenous Cultures Today: Protecting Native Families and Practicing Cultural Traditions

By Cayla Bellanger DeGroat (White Earth Band of Ojibwe)

Discover how boarding schools took Indigenous peoples away from their families and cultures, and how Indigenous peoples are protecting their languages and traditions today.

J E98.E85 D44 2025

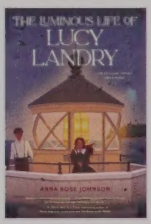


The Kodiaks: Home Ice Advantage

By David A. Robertson (Norway House Cree Nation)

Alex joins a local hockey team to deal with the stress of moving to a new city, but anti-Indigenous bullying from opposing teams leaves him wondering if there's a place for him in the sport.

J FICTION ROBERTSO D

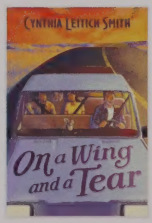


The Luminous Life of Lucy Landry

By Anna Rose Johnson (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians)

Lucy, a spirited French-Ojibwe orphan, is sent to the stormy waters of Lake Superior to live with a mysterious family of lighthouse keepers where she hopes to find the legendary necklace her father spent his life seeking.

J FICTION JOHNSON A



On a Wing and a Tear

By Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee Creek)

Great-grandfather Bat, a winged creature who can talk, needs help getting to Georgia from Chicago due to an injured wing. Lifelong friends Mel and Ray join him, along with Ray's grandpa, for a road trip full of adventure and mystery.

J FICTION SMITH C

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

Red Bird Danced

By Dawn Quigley (Ojibwe)

Ariel and Tomah, who have always lived near each other in an intertribal housing complex, develop their friendship as they tackle learning difficulties and grief over a missing aunt.

J FICTION QUIGLEY D

The Ribbon Skirt

By Cameron Mukwa (Anishinaabe)

Two-Spirit tween Anang wants to wear a ribbon skirt — a piece of traditional Anishinaabe clothing usually only worn by women — but worries what others will think.

J GRAPHIC RIBBON SKIRT

Stealing Little Moon: The Legacy of the American Indian Boarding Schools

By Dan SaSuWeh Jones (Ponca Nation)

Part American history, part family history, Jones explores the miseducation and the mistreatment of Indigenous kids while celebrating their strength, resiliency, and courage — and the ultimate failure of the US government to erase them.

J E97.5 .J66 2024

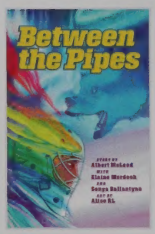
Blue Stars: Mission One: The Vice Principal Problem

By Kekla Magoon & Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee Creek), Illustrated by Molly Murakami

When cousins Riley, who has a way with people, and Maya, a tech wizard, move in with their grandma, they get off to a rocky start until they join forces as superheroes to stop their school culture from being threatened by money, power, and lies.

J GRAPHIC BLUE STARS

TEEN



Between the Pipes

By Albert McLeod (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and Métis) with Sonya Ballantyne (Swampy Cree) and Elaine Mordoch, Illustrated by Alice RL (Ojibwe)

Chase, an Indigenous hockey player, connects with a Two-Spirit Elder who helps him embrace healthy masculinity and his gay identity.

TEEN GRAPHIC BETWEEN THE PIPES

A Constellation of Minor Bears

By Jen Ferguson (Métis)

While hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, a group of teens navigates changing friendships in the aftermath of a climbing accident.

TEEN FICTION FERGUSON J

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

Indiginerds : Tales from Modern Indigenous Life

Edited by Alina Pete (Cree)

This collection of eleven comics, representing a variety of tribal backgrounds, centers on modern Native teens following their passions and building community.

TEEN GRAPHIC GN380 .I54 2024

Little Moons

By Jen Storm (Ojibwe), Illustrated by Alice RL (Ojibwe) & Ryan Howe

A teen finds comfort in her Ojibwe culture as she mourns the disappearance of her older sister. But do lights turning on by themselves, objects going missing, and little moons appearing mean her spirit lingers?

TEEN GRAPHIC LITTLE MOONS

Looking for Smoke

By K.A. Cobell (Blackfeet Nation)

After a Blackfeet girl's murder, the last four people to see her alive set out to clear their names...even though they all have messy histories with her.

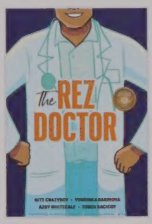
TEEN FICTION COBELL K

Sheine Lende

By Darcie Little Badger (Lipan Apache), Illustrated by Rovina Cai

Shane, who has experience tracking down missing persons, must search for her own mother when she disappears after a mysterious interaction with a fairy ring.

TEEN SCIFI FANTASY LITTLEBA D



The Rez Doctor

By Gitz Crazyboy (Blackfoot and Dene), Illustrated by Azby Whitecalf (Plains Cree), Veronika Barinova, & Toben Racicot

Meeting a doctor who shares his Blackfoot background inspires Ryan to pursue medicine, but college proves more challenging than he imagined.

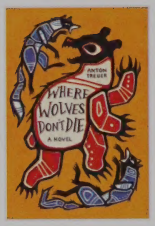
TEEN GRAPHIC REZ DOCTOR

The Unfinished

By Cheryl Isaacs (Kanien'kehá:ka)

Small-town athlete Avery awakens an old horror in a forest pond and starts seeing visions of floods. When people start going missing, she'll have to lean on her Kanien'kehá:ka community for answers.

TEEN FICTION ISAACS C

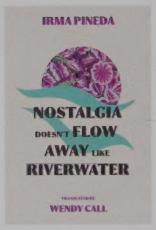


Where Wolves Don't Die

By Anton Treuer (Ojibwe)

Ojibwe teen Ezra, who is falsely accused of arson and murder, joins his grandfather in a remote part of Canada to escape his pursuers.

TEEN FICTION TREUER A



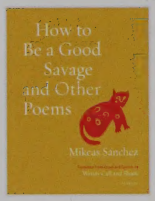
Nostalgia Doesn't Flow Away Like Riverwater

By Irma Pineda (Binnizá/ Isthmus Zapotec)

Pineda's trilingual poetry collection tells a story, in Zapotec, Spanish, and English, of separation and displacement in two voices: a person who has migrated for work and their partner who waits at home in Juchitán.

PM4549.P56 X5413 2024

EXPRESSIONS

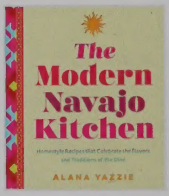


How to Be a Good Savage and Other Poems

By Mikeas Sánchez (Ore'yomo/Zoque)

A powerful collection of poems that pairs the bilingual originals with an English translation from the first writer to publish in Zoque and Spanish.

PM4556.Z95 E5 2023

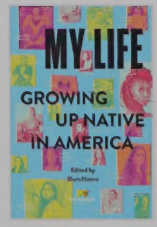


The Modern Navajo Kitchen: Homestyle Recipes that Celebrate the Flavors and Traditions of the Diné

By Alana Yazzie (Diné/Navajo)

Reconnect with your heritage or learn a new cuisine in this cookbook that includes a short history of Navajo culinary traditions and recommendations for sourcing ingredients.

E99 .N3Y39 2025



My Life: Growing Up Native in America

Edited by IllumiNative (Intertribal authors)

A collection of essays and poems that captures and celebrates the modern Native American experience featuring essays by Mato Wayuhi, Angeline Boulley, and others.

E98.S7 M95 2024

Thunder Song: Essays

By Sasha taqʷšəblu LaPointe (Upper Skagit and Nooksack Indian Tribes)

Coast Salish punk LaPointe explores her own history, as well as the role of art and community in helping modern Indigenous people find belonging and strength in their heritage.

PS3612.A64394 T49 2024

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

FICTION

1666

By Lora Chilton (Patawomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia)

After two Patawomeck women are kidnapped and enslaved by colonizers and sent to Barbados, they plan their escape, returning to their lands and the remaining members of their tribe.

FICTION CHILTON L

All I See Is Violence

By Angie Elita Newell (Łıŕđlıı̨.Kų́ę́ First Nation)

A poignant retelling of the 1876 Battle of Little Bighorn and the social upheaval on the Pine Ridge Reservation in 1972 during the height of the American Indian Movement.

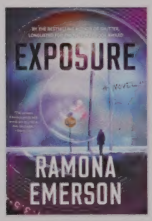
FICTION NEWELL A

Coexistence: Stories

By Billy-Ray Belcourt (Driftpile Cree Nation)

A collection of intersecting stories about Indigenous love and loneliness.

FICTION BELCOURT B



Exposure

By Ramona Emerson (Diné)

This sequel to *Shutter* is a dual-voice cat-and-mouse thriller told from the points of view of a killer who has created his own deadly religion and the only person who can stop him.

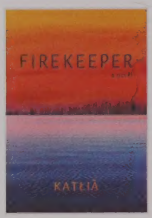
FICTION EMERSON R

Fire Exit

By Morgan Talty (Penobscot Indian Nation)

Talty's full-length fiction debut tells the story of a white man who must decide whether to tell his Indigenous daughter the complications of her heritage.

FICTION TALTY M



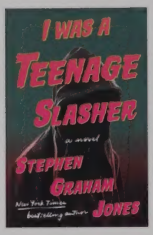
Firekeeper

By Katłią (Yellowknives Dene First Nation from Somba K'e (Yellowknife), Northwest Territories)

A coming-of-age story featuring a neglected teen who serves as an Indigenous community's firekeeper as part of community-led rehabilitation following her incarceration for arson.

FICTION LAFFERTY C

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

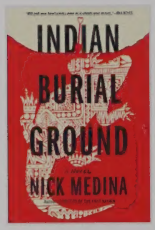


I Was A Teenage Slasher

By Stephen Graham Jones (Blackfeet)

This latest work from master of horror Stephen Graham Jones follows a teenage boy's supernatural journey to becoming a killer in a small Texas town.

FICTION JONES S



Indian Burial Ground

By Nick Medina (Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana)

A thought-provoking, mysterious, and mythical tale of horror featuring a family navigating two timelines: the present and the mid-Eighties.

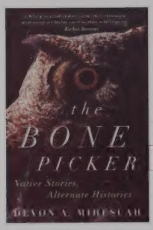
FICTION MEDINA N

Silent Are the Dead

By D.M. Rowell (Kiowa)

Mud Sawpole discovers an illegal fracking operation, a murder, and the theft of artifacts on Kiowa tribal land in this sequel to *Never Name the Dead*.

FICTION ROWELL D



The Bone Picker: Native Stories, Alternate Histories

By Devon A. Mihesuah (Choctaw)

A spine-tingling collection blending fiction with mysterious and frightening figures from Choctaw lore.

FICTION MIHESUAH D

The Forgetters

By Greg Sarris (Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria)

Question Woman and Answer Woman recount a series of interconnected tales of Indigenous people, told in the classic style of southern Pomo and Coast Miwok creation stories.

FICTION SARRIS G

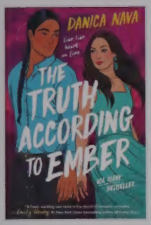
The Mighty Red

By Louise Erdrich (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians of North Dakota/Ojibwe)

Set during the Great Recession of 2008-2009, the community of Argus, North Dakota, gathers to celebrate a wedding that may or may not take place.

FICTION ERDRICH L

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

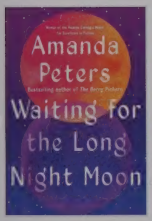


The Truth According to Ember

By Danica Nava (Chickasaw)

Two Indigenous main characters, Ember (Chickasaw) and Danuwoa (Cherokee,) navigate a secret office romance, workplace microaggressions, and a well-intentioned lie.

ROMANCE NAVA D



Waiting for the Long Night Moon: Stories

By Amanda Peters (Mi'kmaq and settler ancestry)

A collection of stories exploring the Indigenous experience across a spectrum of time and place — from contact with European settlers to the fight for the right to clean water.

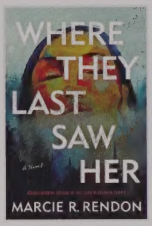
FICTION PETERS A

When Stars Have Teeth

By Dani Trujillo (Pueblo and Xicana)

Buffy Yellowbird is busy with her job at San Francisco's Urban Indian Center and has no time for relationships or suave lawyer Santiago Morales in this grumpy/sunshine romance.

AVAILABLE AS AN EBOOK THROUGH OVERDRIVE



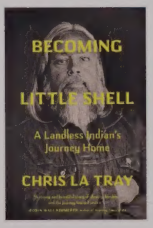
Where They Last Saw Her

By Marcie R. Rendon (White Earth Nation/Anishinabe)

An Ojibwe community organizer investigates the disappearances of two Indigenous women on a northern Minnesota reservation.

MYSTERY RENDON M

MEMOIR

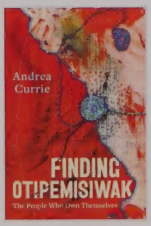


Becoming Little Shell: A Landless Indian's Journey Home

By Chris La Tray (Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians)

A storyteller of Chippewa heritage recounts the journey to discover his Indigenous roots and how, embracing his full identity, he joins the struggle of the Little Shells tribe towards federal recognition.

BIOG E99.C6 L3624 2024



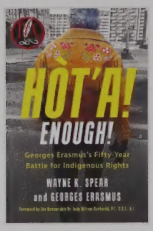
Finding Otipemisiwak: The People Who Own Themselves

By Andrea Currie (Métis)

Forcibly removed from her Indigenous family by the Canadian government as a child during the 1960s, Currie shares her journey back to her nation and the truth of who she is.

E99.M47 C87 2024

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

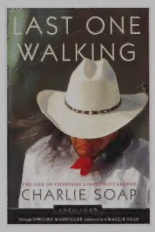


Hòt'a! Enough!: Georges Erasmus's Fifty-Year Battle for Indigenous Rights

By Wayne K Spear (Kanien'kehá:ka/Mohawk) & Georges Erasmus (Dene)

Erasmus, a Dene leader who has spent 50 years as a radical Native rights crusader in Canada, shares his life story.

BIOG E92 .S6567 2024

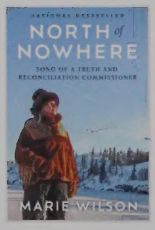


Last One Walking : The Life of Cherokee Community Leader Charlie Soap

By Greg Shaw (Cherokee)

Part memoir, part history, and part current-affairs journalism, this book chronicles the life, work, and leadership style of the influential Cherokee organizer Charlie Soap, the spouse of Principal Chief Wilma Mankiller.

BIOG E99.C5 S6487 2024



North of Nowhere: Song of a Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner

By Marie Wilson

With the skills of a journalist, the heart of a mother and grandmother, and the insights of a life as the spouse of a residential school survivor, Commissioner Wilson guides readers through her years witnessing survivor testimony across the country as part of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

E96.5 .W55 2024

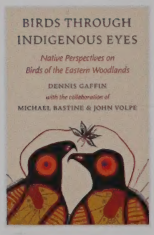
Whiskey Tender: A Memoir

By Deborah Jackson Taffa (Quechan (Yuma) Nation & Laguna Pueblo)

Reflecting on her past and present, Taffa reminds us of how the cultural narratives of her ancestors have been excluded from the central mythologies and structures of the "melting pot" of America, revealing all that is sacrificed for the promise of acceptance.

BIOG E99.Y94 T34 2024

NONFICTION


BIRDS THROUGH INDIGENOUS EYES
Native Perspectives on Birds of the Eastern Woodlands
DENNIS GAFFIN
with the collaboration of
MICHAEL BASTINE & JOHN VOLPE

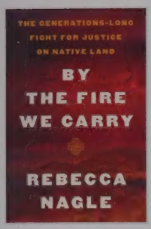
Birds Through Indigenous Eyes: Native Perspectives on Birds of the Eastern Woodlands

By Dennis Gaffin, Michael Bastine (Algonquin descent and member of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation) & John Volpe (Ojibwe and Métis descent and member of Nipissing First Nation of Ontario)

An intimate and personal account of the profound roles that birds play in the lives of some Indigenous peoples as spiritual and practical helpers that can teach humans how to live well.

E99.A35 G34 2024

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook



By the Fire We Carry: The Generations-Long Fight for Justice on Native Land

By Rebecca Nagle (Cherokee)

Nagle braids the story of the forced move of Native Americans onto treaty lands and a small-town murder in the 1990s that led to a Supreme Court ruling reaffirming Native rights to that land more than a century later.

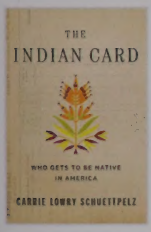
LARGE PRINT E93 .N19 2025

Dorothy Grant: An Endless Thread

By Dorothy Grant (Kaigani Haida of the Raven Clan from the Brown Bear house of Howkan)

Part look-book, part memoir, and part history, this illustrated monument to a singular designer who helped inspire the growing Indigenous fashion movement is also a powerful demonstration of the enduring resonance and possibilities of Haida art.

E99.H2 D67 2024

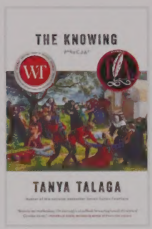


The Indian Card: Who Gets to Be Native in America

By Carrie Lowry Schuettpelz (Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina)

An exploration of Native American identity, tribal enrollment, ancestry, and what all of this reveals about our understandings of race and politics.

E99.C91 S44 2024



The Knowing

By Tanya Talaga (Fort William First Nation (Anishinaabe))

Talaga shares a seminal unravelling of the centuries-long oppression of Indigenous peoples that continues to reverberate in their communities into the present.

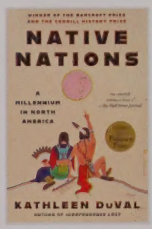
E78.C2 T35 2024

Medicine Wheel for the Planet: A Journey Toward Personal and Ecological Healing

By Dr. Jennifer Grenz (Nlaka'pamux)

A personal journey of bringing together Western science and Indigenous ecology to transform our understanding of the human role in healing our planet.

GN476.7 .G74 2024



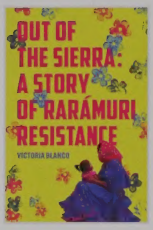
Native Nations: A Millennium in North America

By Kathleen DuVal

DuVal shows how the definitions of power and means of exerting it shifted over time while the sovereignty and influence of Native peoples has remained a constant — and will continue far into the future.

E77 .D887 2024

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook



Out of the Sierra: A Story of Rarámuri Resistance

By Victoria Blanco

Blanco considers Indigenous identity with tenderness and intelligence, demanding recognition and justice for the Rarámuri people as they resist assimilation and uphold traditional knowledge in the face of broken systems.

F1221.T25 B57 2024

We Walk the Earth in Beauty: Traditional Navajo Lifeways

By Kathy Eckles Hooker, photographs by Helen Lau Running

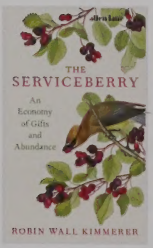
Witness the time-honored practices of the Navajo as shared by wisdom-keepers who live close to the land and follow ancestral ways.

BIOG E99.N3 H75 2024

The Paranormal Ranger : A Navajo Investigator's Search for the Unexplained

By Stanley Milford, Jr. (Navajo and Cherokee)

A Navajo Ranger's chilling and clear-eyed narrative of his investigations into bizarre cases of the paranormal and unexplained over the course of his illustrious career serving the Navajo Nation.



The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World

By Robin Wall Kimmerer (Potawatomi)

As the Indigenous scientist and author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Kimmerer harvests serviceberries alongside the birds and considers the ethics of reciprocity that lies at the heart of the gift economy.

BD581 .K56 2024

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook

NATIVE LIVES, NATIVE STORIES

BOOKLIST FOR ADULTS, TEENS, & CHILDREN

City of Boston
Michelle Wu, *Mayor*

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Boston Public Library
David Leonard, *President*

FREE TO ALL

Board of Trustees
Ray Liu, *Chair of the Board*
Evelyn Arana Ortiz, *Vice Chair of the Board*
Navjeet K. Bal
Joe Berman
Jim Canales
Cheryl Cronin
John T. Hailer
Jeffrey B. Hawkins
Julie Kim
Jonathan S. Lavine
José C. Masso III
Porsha Olayiwola
Mike Rush
Christian Westra
Lynn Perry Wooten